



# STRENGTHENING SERVICES FOR MONTGOMERY'S IMMIGRANT POPULATION

*15th Anniversary Celebration of the Gilchrist Center*

Please join County Executive Ike Leggett, members of the Gilchrist Family, and other distinguished national, state, and county leaders past and present as we work to strengthen our capacity to serve Montgomery County's immigrant population. The Montgomery County of 2016 is a thriving and diverse community of more than one million people. It is a talent magnet for people from across the United States and around the world. One-third of our one million people were born in other countries. This did not happen by accident. Decades ago, Montgomery County established itself as one of America's most welcoming, immigrant friendly communities.

*"The Gilchrist Center is the heart and soul of Montgomery County's welcoming attitude to our immigrant neighbors. I am dedicated to making Montgomery County one of the very most welcoming communities in the world. We know that being a talent magnet for people from every corner of the globe is our edge in the global marketplace of the 21st century. The Gilchrist Center provides the cost free services and classes that new immigrants need to establish a strong foundation for their life in America."*

— County Executive Ike Leggett

Key to that effort was the creation of the Gilchrist Center. This September is the 15th anniversary of the Charles W. Gilchrist Center, Montgomery County's immigrant resource center.

The Gilchrist Center is the main gateway to success for thousands of immigrants who come to Montgomery County with limited financial resources. We are asking you to help ensure that all new Americans who come to Montgomery County are given every opportunity to build their skills, support their

families, and thrive. The free classes are the first step to learning English for many who could not otherwise afford to pay for private lessons. Computer classes allow some of our neighbors in need to get promotions at work that allow them to house and feed their families. Classes at the Gilchrist Center start many on the path to citizenship. The Center's information and referral staff connect our new neighbors with the services they need to thrive.

We are holding our 15th Anniversary Celebration in conjunction with the 8th Annual World of Montgomery Festival on Sunday October 16, 2016 on the Rockville Campus of Montgomery College. In addition to a fun celebration with Charlie Gilchrist's family and recognition of Gilchrist Center volunteers, we are going to launch a fabulous new Quick Guide to Services for Immigrants in seven different languages as well as a 15 year history of the good work of the Gilchrist Center.

We need to raise \$25,000 to support these important new publications. Gifts of \$100 or more will be recognized on the event day program, gifts of \$250 and more will be recognized in the 15 year history of the Gilchrist Center, and gifts of \$1,000 and more will also be recognized on each Quick Guide.

We hope you will support this effort by sending a tax deductible contribution made payable to "Fund for Montgomery/Community Foundation in Montgomery County" to this address: Bruce Adams, Office of Community Partnerships, Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, MD 20850. The Community Foundation in Montgomery County is a tax exempt public charity that serves as the fiscal agent for the Fund for Montgomery. The Fund for Montgomery is raising money to strengthen the Gilchrist Center as it celebrates its 15th anniversary so that it may serve more immigrant families.

On September 8, 2001, Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan opened the Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity in Wheaton, Maryland to serve Montgomery County's growing immigrant population.

Fifteen years later, the Gilchrist Center has more than proven its worth. Just in fiscal year 2015, the Gilchrist Center has:

provided 118 volunteer led English, Spanish, and computer classes at no cost to 9,115 residents; connected 8,490 residents to valuable services by phone or in person; served 4,237 residents through partners at Gilchrist Center sites; expanded our partnership with Montgomery College by opening an office in

the underserved East County; and assisted MCPS in serving 794 children and their parents who had fled violence in Central America.

This extraordinary work is possible because a small core staff is enhanced by 143 volunteers who donated 6,485 total volunteer hours at an estimated value of \$149,609 last year. With our community partners, outstanding volunteers, and dedicated staff, the Gilchrist Center is building cultural competence and strengthening community every day as we strive to make Montgomery County a thriving multicultural community where every resident feels welcomed and valued.

## Charlie Gilchrist's Legacy

On this 15th anniversary, we seek not just to raise funds to enhance the work of the Gilchrist Center. We seek also to honor the public servant whose welcoming attitude toward immigrants more than three decades ago established the foundation for the model multicultural 21st century community Montgomery County has become. Charles W. Gilchrist served as Montgomery County Executive from 1978-1986 before retiring from public office to become an Episcopal priest. During his service, County Executive Gilchrist recognized the changing face of the largely white, suburban community where he had grown up. He appointed Montgomery County's first African American and Hispanic/Latino community liaisons in 1979 and 1980. He established a minority business procurement program for minority, women, and disabled business owners to increase access to contracting with the County. He worked to establish the County's Committee for Ethnic Affairs in 1985 to advise the County Executive and County Council on matters of public policy relating to the County's growing diverse population. He promoted positive commu-

nication between the Police Department and minority communities, and he started Montgomery County's annual ethnic heritage festival.

We believe the 15th anniversary this Fall provides the perfect opportunity for the Gilchrist Center to build on the strengths developed in our first fifteen years and take giant steps forward to meet the needs of the future. With the money raised, the Gilchrist Center will be able to tell the story of the changing Montgomery County, make the case for the positive impacts of welcoming immigrants, expand the population that knows about the resources provided at the Gilchrist Center, while strengthening our ability to serve.

*Please join County Executive Ike Leggett, the Gilchrist Family, and distinguished national, state, and county leaders past and present as we work to strengthen our capacity to serve Montgomery County's immigrant population.*

**WHAT?** 15th Anniversary Celebration to Support the Charles W. Gilchrist Center, Montgomery County's Immigrant Resource Center

**WHEN?** Sunday October 16 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

**WHERE?** Montgomery College Rockville Campus, 51 Mannakee Street, Rockville

**WHO?** Gilchrist Family, County Executive Ike Leggett, and a host of top elected officials past and present as well as staff and volunteers from the Gilchrist Center

**QUESTIONS?** Please contact Bruce Adams at 240-777-2558 or [bruce.adams@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:bruce.adams@montgomerycountymd.gov) OR Hamza Khan Hamza @[hamzakhan.me](mailto:hamzakhan.me)

**MORE INFORMATION?** Please review the FY2015 Annual Report of the Gilchrist Center by logging onto: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/gilchrist/>

**CONTRIBUTIONS?** Please send your tax deductible contribution made payable to "Fund for Montgomery/Community Foundation in Montgomery County" to this address: Bruce Adams, Office of Community Partnerships, Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, MD 20850.

*Note: The Community Foundation in Montgomery County is a tax exempt public charity that serves as the fiscal agent for the Fund for Montgomery. The Fund for Montgomery was established at the initiative of County Executive Leggett in 2011 to support the county's most important community building events. All money donated for this event will go to strengthening the Gilchrist Center's ability to serve our immigrant population.*